

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces all previous versions and listings in the present application.

Please cancel claims 1 through 4 without prejudice or disclaimer.

1. – 4. (Canceled)

5. (Currently amended) A load drive control system having a control apparatus, and a drive apparatus ~~which~~that performs driving of a load based on a control signal supplied from said control apparatus, wherein:

said control apparatus comprises:

a low-side switching element coupled to a signal input point within said drive apparatus, and

means for driving said low-side switching element in accordance with a pulse width modulation (PWM) signal to output a power supply enabling control signal by repetitively connecting and disconnecting said signal input point to and from a common ground potential of said control apparatus and drive apparatus, and

~~wherein~~ said drive apparatus comprises:

a drive signal output section comprising control signal processing and output means coupled to receive said power supply enabling control signal, for outputting a drive signal for driving said load, in accordance with a duty ratio of said PWM signal, and control signal detection means coupled to said signal input point, for selectively generating an internal control signal in accordance with whether said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied,

power supply enabling control means controlled by said internal control signal for selectively enabling and interrupting a supply of DC electrical power at a first predetermined voltage level from a drive power source to said drive signal output section, and

signal level lowering means controlled by said internal control signal for setting a maximum level of said power supply enabling control signal at a second predetermined voltage level that is lower than said first predetermined voltage level, while said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Currently amended) A load drive control system ~~according to claim 5,~~ having a control apparatus, and a drive apparatus that performs driving of a load based on a control signal supplied from said control apparatus, wherein:

said control apparatus comprises:

a low-side switching element coupled to a signal input point within said drive apparatus, and

means for driving said low-side switching element in accordance with a pulse width modulation (PWM) signal to output a power supply enabling control signal by repetitively connecting and disconnecting said signal input point to and from a common ground potential of said control apparatus and drive apparatus,

said drive apparatus comprises:

a drive signal output section comprising control signal processing and output means coupled to receive said power supply enabling control signal, for outputting a drive signal for driving said load, in accordance with a duty ratio of said PWM signal, and control signal detection means coupled to said signal input point, for selectively generating an internal control signal in accordance with whether said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied,

power supply enabling control means controlled by said internal control signal for selectively enabling and interrupting a supply of DC electrical power at a first predetermined voltage level from a drive power source to said drive signal output section, and

signal level lowering means controlled by said internal control signal for setting a maximum level of said power supply enabling control signal at a second predetermined voltage level that is lower than said first predetermined voltage level, while said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied,

~~wherein~~ said power supply enabling control means of said drive apparatus comprises:

a first switching element connected to said drive power source and having a control input terminal thereof coupled to said signal input point, adapted to be thereby set from a non-conducting condition to a conducting condition when said power supply enabling control signal begins to be supplied from said control apparatus and thereby beginning to supply electrical power to said drive signal output section, and

a second switching element, adapted to be set in a conducting condition when said first switching element enters the conducting condition and to be thereafter held in said conducting condition until supplying of said power supply enabling control signal is terminated, said second switching element coupled to control said first switching element such as to maintain

said first switching element continuously in the conducting condition while said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied, and

~~and wherein~~ said signal level lowering means comprises:

a zener diode having a cathode thereof connected to said signal input point, and

a third switching element connected to an anode of said zener diode, controlled to be set in the conducting condition together with said first switching element, for thereby establishing a conducting path through said zener diode to said ground potential.

8. (Previously presented) A load drive control system according to claim 7, wherein said second switching element is controlled by said internal control signal for being held continuously in the conducting condition while said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied.

9. (Previously presented) A load drive control system according to claim 7, wherein a control input of said third switching element is coupled to said first switching element for thereby being connected to said second voltage level while said first switching element is in the conducting condition, said third switching element being thereby held continuously in the conducting condition while said power supply enabling control signal is being supplied.